

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 9, 10, and 21 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An image and audio processing apparatus comprising:
an input unit configured to input image data and audio data corresponding thereto;
an image ~~encoding unit~~ encoder configured to encode the image data input by said input unit;
a first audio ~~encoding unit~~ encoder configured to encode the audio data input by said input unit by an audio encoding method for encoding general audio data;
a second audio ~~encoding unit~~ encoder configured to encode the audio data input by said input unit, by another audio encoding method which is suitable for encoding speech data;
an image encoding setting unit configured to set the encoding ~~in~~ for said image ~~encoding unit~~ encoder to encode the image data so that a partial region in each of frame images included in the image data is encoded with a high image quality;
an audio encoding control unit including said first encoder and said second encoder, said audio encoding unit being configured to ~~control~~ operate said first audio ~~encoding unit~~ encoder and said second audio ~~encoding unit~~ encoder in accordance with whether said image encoding setting unit sets the encoding to make the partial region in each of frame images the high image quality, such that (1) the audio data is encoded by said first

audio encoding unit encoder to provide audio encoded data irrespectively of whether said image encoding setting unit effects the setting of the encoding, and (2) the audio data is encoded by each of said first audio encoding unit encoder and said second audio encoding unit encoder in a time period corresponding to the encoding set by said image encoding setting unit so that one of the respective audio encoded data provided by said first audio encoding unit encoder and said second audio encoding unit encoder is selected during the time period; and

a data integration unit configured to integrate the encoded audio data provided by said audio encoding control unit with encoded image data encoded by said image encoding unit encoder in accordance with the encoding set by whether said image encoding setting unit sets the encoding for said image encoder, so as (a) to integrate, with the encoded image data encoded by said image encoding unit encoder, a selected one of the respective encoded audio data provided by said first audio encoding unit encoder and said second audio encoding unit encoder in a case that said image encoding setting unit effects the setting of the encoding, and (b) to integrate, with the encoded image data encoded by said image encoder, the encoded audio data provided by said first audio encoder in a case that said image encoding setting unit does not effect the setting of the encoding, thereby outputting the integrated encoded data.

2 - 5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said image encoding setting unit makes the setting so as to encode a region, with the high image quality, including an arbitrary object in the image data.

7. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said image encoding setting unit makes ROI setting of the region including the arbitrary object, and wherein said image encoding unit executes ROI encoding.

8. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said image encoding setting unit makes the setting so as to encode the partial region of the image data with the high image quality in accordance with a user's instruction for designating an object displayed on a display screen.

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said image encoding setting unit makes the ROI setting in accordance with the user's instruction, and wherein said image encoding unit encoder executes the ROI encoding.

10. (Currently Amended) An image and audio processing method comprising:
an input step of inputting image data and audio data corresponding thereto;
an image encoding step of encoding the image data input by said input step;

a first audio encoding step of encoding audio data input by said input step, by an audio encoding method for encoding general audio data;

a second audio data encoding step of encoding the audio data input by said input step, by another audio encoding method which is suitable for encoding speech data;

an image encoding setting step of setting the encoding in said image encoding step to control an image quality of encoded image data in accordance with a partial region in each of frame images included in the image data;

an audio encoding ~~control~~ step of controlling performing said first audio encoding step and said second audio encoding step in accordance with whether said image encoding setting step setting sets the encoding to make the partial region in each of frame images the high image quality, such that (1) the audio data is encoded by said first audio encoding step to provide audio encoded data irrespectively of whether said image encoding setting step effects the setting of the encoding, and (2) the audio data is encoded by each of said first audio encoding step and said second audio encoding step in a time period corresponding to the encoding set in said image encoding setting step so that one of the respective audio encoded data provided by said first audio encoding step and said second audio encoding step is selected during the time period;

a data integration step of integrating the encoded audio data provided in said audio encoding ~~control~~ step with encoded image data encoded in said image encoding step in accordance with whether the encoding is set in said image encoding setting step, so as to
(a) integrate with the encoded image data encoded in said image data encoding step, a

selected one of the respective encoded audio provided in said first audio encoding step and said second audio encoding step in a case that said image encoding setting step effects the setting of the encoding, and (b) to integrate, with the encoded image data encoded in said image encoding step, the encoded audio data provided in said first audio encoding step in a case that said image encoding setting step does not effect the setting of the encoding, thereby outputting the integrated encoded data.

11 - 14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 10, wherein said image encoding setting step includes setting so as to encode a region, with the high image quality including an arbitrary object in the image data.

16. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 15, wherein said image encoding setting step includes making ROI setting of the region including the arbitrary object, and

wherein said image encoding step includes executing ROI encoding.

17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 10, wherein said image encoding setting step includes setting so as to encode the partial region of the image data

with the high image quality in accordance with a user's instruction for designating an object displayed on a display screen.

18. (Original) A method according to claim 17, wherein said image encoding setting step includes making the ROI setting in accordance with the user's instruction, and wherein said image encoding step includes executing the ROI encoding.

19. (Original) A storage medium storing a program executable by a data processing apparatus, said program including program codes for realizing an image processing method described in claim 10.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said data integration unit selects encoded audio data having higher quality by comparing audio quality of the encoded audio data provided by said first audio encoding unit encoder and audio quality of the encoded audio data provided by said second audio encoding unit encoder, and integrates the selected encoded audio data with the encoded image data.

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 10, wherein said data integration step includes selecting encoded audio data having higher quality by comparing

audio quality of the encoded audio data provided in said first audio encoding step and audio quality of the encoded audio data provided in said second audio encoding step, and integrating the selected encoded audio data with the encoded image data.